

FLIGHT JACKET

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

April 2, 2004

Miramar recognized for Installation Excellence

Story compiled by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, named Marine Corps Air Station Miramar as a winner of the 2004 Commander-in-Chief's Installation Excellence Award March 29.

The award, presented to five military installations throughout the U.S., recognizes the outstanding and innovative efforts of the people who operate and maintain U.S. military installations. The five recipients for 2004 of this highly competitive presidential award were selected for their exemplary support of Department of Defense missions.

"This is an honor for MCAS Miramar and everyone who works here," said Col. Paul C. Christian, chief of staff, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area. "Winning the Marine Corps' Installation Excellence Award is a credit to Miramar's quality of life, innovativeness and customer service. Our people are second to none in displaying the pride, professionalism and ideals that create and sustain installation excellence."

Excellent installations enable better mission performance and enhance the quality of life for military men and women and their families, and each winning installation succeeded in providing excellent working, housing and recreational conditions, according to a DoD press release.

"The Office of the Secretary of Defense sponsors this award competition annually to recognize 'the best of the best' installation in each service and the Defense Logistics Agency," said Sherry A. Pender, deputy assistant chief of staff G1, MCABWA. "Proclaimed by President Reagan in 1984 and subsequently sanctioned by each president since, the award recognizes the efforts of the people who operate



These two-person bachelor enlisted quarters here are the standard living facilities for single noncommissioned officers. Innovative improvements to quality of life, such as the air station's 11 BEQs, attributed to Marine Corps Air Station Miramar receiving the 2004 Installation Excellence Award. **Official USMC photo**

and maintain our installations and who have done the best with their resources to support the mission, increase productivity, and enhance quality of life. Miramar will receive a trophy with the president's seal for permanent retention, an Installation Flag of Excellence, a congratulatory letter from the president and \$200,000 to be used

at the command's discretion."

With 2004 marking the twentieth anniversary of the award, Miramar and this year's other winners will be formally recognized at a ceremony scheduled for May 7 in the Pentagon Center Courtyard and will be open for media coverage.

HMM-166 Marines gear up for future deployments

Story by Lance Cpl. John Sayas

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Marines of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 166 (Reinforced) "Sea Elk" packed up their gear and boarded the *USS Belleau Wood* before departing on an 11-day training mission with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit March 23-24.

The squadron is designated as the composite squadron of the combat aviation element of the 11th MEU, according to Lt. Col. Will Guthrie, commanding officer, HMM-166 (Rein), 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. The squadron, which normally functions with 12 CH-46 helicopters and 150 Marines, was reinforced Dec. 15 with per-

sonnel, aircraft and equipment from several other units. The units include more than 350 Marines from Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 169, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465, Marine Air Control Group 38, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadrons 16 and 39, 3rd Low-Altitude Air Defense Battalion and Marine Attack Squadron 211 based out of Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz.

The Marines are currently involved in a six-month training cycle for the 11th MEU to become special operations capable qualified before a scheduled six-month deployment to the Western Pacific and Southwest Asia regions early this summer, according to Guthrie, a Camp Lejeune, N.C.,

native. During the deployment, the 11th MEU will be acting as America's quick reaction force to safeguard U.S. citizens and support the country's interests abroad.

"It's our planned six-month deployment, but it could be real-world contingent because different things can happen," Guthrie commented. "HMM-163 just returned with the 13th MEU, and they were deployed for six and a half months."

The Marines wrapped up two weeks of urban training dubbed "Training in an Urban Environment" earlier this month in Phoenix and are now preparing their next phase of training at sea, said Guthrie. The squadron trained with the 11th MEU doing urban and navigation training and

worked on landings in confined areas.

"Everything that we practice is all something that we potentially will have to do," said 27-year-old 1st Lt. Brian D. Maurer, human affairs officer, HMM-166, and Clearwater, Fl., native. "It's nice to work out the kinks now and see what works and what doesn't."

According to Guthrie, the Marines have three training exercises at sea over the next few months to do shipboard training before the 11th MEU is designated as special operations capable. Their training will include boat raids, traditional amphibious landings, long-range helicopter

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Weekend forecast from Miramar's weather station



Generals meet at Al Asad



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Bands play together



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Families and Friends of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing,

First and foremost, I want to thank you for your support of our Marines and Sailors as they go about the business of defending freedom and making this world a safer place for us all.

This is indeed a dangerous part of the world and there are many here who wish us harm. I want you to know that your Marines and Sailors continue to prepare for the mission that has been bestowed upon us, and we continue to do everything possible to build the defenses that will protect us from attack. Those who choose to attack us will be dealt with in a quick, violent, and decisive manner. We will not however forget that we are here to help the Iraqi people regain control of their country and we will not allow those few who oppose us to cause us to do harm to those innocent civilians who desire to live in freedom.

Tragically, we have recently lost two of our own brothers here. The loss of these warriors has been felt by us all. My thoughts are with their families and friends as they mourn their loss. We have remembered both in services befitting Marines who gave their lives in defense of freedom.

I believe I am safe in saying that our Marines and Sailors are enjoying some of the best living conditions that I have seen in a forward-deployed area. We have an impressive array of services such as laundry, a recreation center, and a chow hall that our Marines have been taking full advantage of day and night.

Overall, the Marines and Sailors of 3rd MAW are serving proudly here as we provide vital combat power to the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force. Again, it is from the heart that I thank each and every one of you for keeping us in your prayers and giving us such vital support in this noble mission.

Semper Fidelis,

James F. Amos
Major General
Commanding General, 3rd MAW

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raids, forward arming and refueling point operations, time-sensitive strikes and air-defense tactics and procedures, and straight transit and small attack boat defense of the amphibious task force and of the Expeditionary Strike Group.

“We will be doing a lot of missions to work toward making the ESG and 11th MEU combat capable,” Guthrie said.

During this time at sea, the Marines will also be working on getting acquainted with life aboard ship to include learning shipboard etiquettes, safety procedures, firefighting and man overboard drills.

“About 50 percent of the Marines have never been on ship before,” he said. “We have a lot of combat experience but not a lot of shipboard experience. We are working on that because the ship is going to be home for six weeks during the workups and six months during the deployment in a shipboard environment.”

Miramar Mail



“Most bases offer free medicine packs like cold medicine. Why does this base not do it?”
Sgt. Julio Jimenez
Travel NCOIC
Finance Office

The medicine pack was discontinued a few years ago because they were being misused and were not being accounted for as they were being distributed to patients.

Currently, patients must be seen by a doctor and have a prescription in order to receive medication from the pharmacy.

If military personnel are in need of care, they can call for an appointment or walk in during sick call hours at the Miramar Medical Clinic from 7:30 to 11 a.m. and 1 to 3 p.m. Monday – Thursday, 7:30 to 11 a.m. on Friday.

To make an appointment call 577-4656.



Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti

Editor’s note:

E-mail your questions to the Commanding General, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar at:
ombpaoflight@miramar.usmc.mil

Please include “Question to the General” in the subject line.

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MCABWA CG, team to return from Iraq

Story by Capt. Michael J. Friel

MCAS Miramar Director, CPAO

Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti, commander, Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area, and commanding general, Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, and his team return Saturday after completing a six-month deployment in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Gallinetti, Capt. Greg Hanweck, and Sgts. David Nuttall and James Wheeler served at the Coalition Provisional Authority and Combined Joint Task Force 7 headquarters located in Baghdad, Iraq under Army Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, commanding general, CJTF-7.

As personal staff to Gallinetti, the team provided direct support and security throughout the deployment.

As chief of staff for CJTF-7, Gallinetti led the Coalition headquarters' primary staff in managing strategic level stability and support operations of more than 130,000 American and international troops from 35 countries. Gallinetti's staff also worked closely with the CPA in governance and policy issues relating to Coalition forces.

During his deployment, Gallinetti and his team saw the completion of more than \$200 million in rebuilding projects, oversaw the force transition from Operation Iraqi Freedom I to OIF II and training of more than 200,000 Iraqis in various Iraq security services.

In what might be the most historic event during Gallinetti's deployment, Coalition forces captured Saddam Hussein, the ousted Ba'ath part leader Dec. 13, 2003.



Sgt. James Wheeler (left), personal security detail, Combined Joint Task Force 7, and Maj. Gen. Jon A. Gallinetti, chief of staff, CJTF-7, attend the 2nd Battalion Iraqi Army graduation in Taji, Iraq January 2004. Photo by Capt. Michael J. Friel

Iwo Jima veteran remembered by Marine Corps family

Story by Cpl. T.D. Smith

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Most Marines in the Corps today wearing the rank of private first class hadn't yet been born on March 3, 1945, but a stitch of freedom had been woven into every Marine's baby blanket by an orphan who died on that day and would have been forgotten, if not for the efforts of his Marine Corps family.

Pfc. Ilario Garcia was born in Ramona, Calif., Jan. 14, 1926. While he was an orphan, he did secure some ties with high school buddies and tutors from his hometown, and some residents from Ramona still remember him.

Johnny Dobson, a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3783, based in Ramona, spearheaded a search for the remains of Garcia. Garcia was killed on Iwo Jima while fighting with the 5th Marine Division on March 3, 1945, just shortly after his 19th birthday.

At that time, Garcia's body was laid to rest in the 5th Marine Division Cemetery on Iwo Jima. However, years after the end of World War II, the troops buried abroad were disinterred, and the final resting places of most of the troops was decided by family members. This is where Dobson comes in to the picture.

The men and women of VFW Post 3783, especially Dobson, have dedicated much time and effort into locating the remains of fallen war heroes hailing from Ramona. Dobson had exhausted almost all his resources, when he decided to call Chuck Little, deputy director, Marine Corps Forces Pacific Public Affairs. Little in turn called the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command and spoke with Aaron Lehl, a historian at

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Youths spring ahead at Spring Carnival

While two Marines firmly hold the target, a Master Yang's Martial Arts School student soars over other students as she attempts to break a board at the Spring Carnival held at the Youth Sports Complex March 27. The martial arts group was one of many children's activity groups to perform at the Marine Corps Community Services fair. The seasonal gala, a Marine Corps Air Station Miramar tradition, treated children and adults alike to food, music, games, live performances, interactive animal exhibits and a visit by Peter Rabbit. Photo by 2nd Lt. P.L. Croom II

Stars shine brightly over deployed Marines

Marine Forces Central, I Marine Expeditionary Force generals visit Iraq

By Staff Sgt. A.C. Mink

MAG-16 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq – Lt. Gen. Wallace C. Gregson, commanding general, Marine Forces Central, and Lt. Gen. James T. Conway, commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force, were welcomed to the air station Sunday by Maj. Gen. James F. Amos, commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing. The visiting generals were here to meet with Marines and Sailors and get a firsthand update on the MAW’s tactical situation.

The visit began with a situational update provided by the 3rd MAW battle staff. During the brief, the MARCENT commander emphasized the importance of the mission here in Iraq.

“What you are doing here is the most important thing our country is doing right now,” Gregson said.

Following the brief, the generals departed to tour the air station and visit the leathernecks of 3rd MAW.

During the tour, the generals drove the perimeter and even stopped at a guard post so that Gregson could meet the Marines on duty there.

Though Gregson’s schedule was very tight, the group also made a stop on the flightline at Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 167, where they got an up-close look at the dust abatement issues that face the rotary wing aircraft here.

“Dust abatement is a big deal,” said Conway. “We are working on the problem experimenting with ways in which to mitigate that problem and ultimately finding the solutions that work.”

Security measures, safety of the Marines and Sailors and improvements to the installation were also topics of conversation.

“The Marines here are serious about what they are doing,” said Conway. “They have made tremendous improvements to the base and are ready to do their job.”

“We are going to do it the right way; we are going to do it the smart way,” said Amos. “We’ve just started, and we’re already making a difference.”



Maj. Gen. James F. Amos (left), commanding general, 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, and Lt. Gen. James T. Conway, commanding general, I Marine Expeditionary Force, share a laugh during Conway’s recent visit to Al Asad, Iraq, March 28. Conway accompanied Lt. Gen. Wallace C. Gregson, commanding general, Marine Forces Central, as they surveyed I MEF subordinate commands. Photo by Staff Sgt. A.C. Mink

3rd MAW Band, high school students join in concert

Story by 2nd Lt. P.L. Croom II

MCAS Miramar Contributing Writer

The Marine Corps tradition of mentorship and community service continued March 26 as the Flathead High School Concert Band and 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band joined in concert outside the Marine Corps Exchange here.

“It is a great opportunity to help and interact with kids and tell the Marine Corps story,” said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas P. Mangan, 3rd MAW Band officer. “The Marine Corps Band Manual states a specific mission of community involvement for purposes of public relations and recruiting, and this is one way of accomplishing that mission.”

Alan Slater, director of the Flathead High School Concert Band, agreed that much is gained through the interaction between the Marines and students. The discipline, work ethic, professionalism and musicianship of Marine bandmen are not foreign to Slater - his son is a corporal and tubist with the Quantico Marine Band.

The idea of working with the Marines came to Slater as he was planning a scholastic trip for his band.

“(Mr. Slater), through the Miramar Public Affairs Office, got in touch with us,” explained Master Sgt. Luis O. Arce, bandmaster and staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, 3rd MAW Band. “Initially, the band just wanted to perform for us, but we knew we could do even more for them.”

The resulting evolution began with rehearsals in small groups of the same instruments. These were followed by a large group rehearsal. The day culminated with a formal concert. During the rehearsals, students received musical instruction from individual Marines of the 3rd MAW Band who played the same instruments as the students.

The morning after arriving from Kalispell, Mont., the students and Marines began working together, capitalizing on only three hours of rehearsal time. The Marines provided individual and small group instruction to the



Musicians from Flathead High School in Kalispell, Mont., along with members of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band entertain patrons during a lunchtime performance on the air station March 26. *Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull*

students on their specific instruments, to include rhythm, tempo, style and dynamics. The training and instruction culminated in a joint concert in which the high school students sat next to their Marine instrumental brethren as they performed selections from several different genres, including various music for wind ensembles and various military marches.

As Marines, the members of 3rd MAW Band are

skilled teachers and instructors - essential leadership traits. As musicians, the Marines not only understand the language of music and all its intricacies, but they can also truly relate to the students on a fundamental level.

“These Marines have been studying their instruments since early in their school years. As such, we have a real understanding of the challenges faced by the high school musician on a daily basis. Basically, we really can relate,”



Flathead High School Band member Kelsi Swank rehearses with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band before performing a joint concert in front of the Marine Corps Exchange March 26. A piece appropriately titled ‘Esprit de Corps’ was among the selections performed by the combined ensemble. *Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull*

Feature

expressed Mangan.

As Sgt. Jerry A. Luczenczyn, trumpeter with 3rd MAW Band, gazed nostalgically on the students, he could see himself sitting in those chairs.

“It reminds me of when I was a trumpet player in high school. It’s a sort of flashback,” he said.

The Marines were excited and honored at the opportunity to perform with and mentor the students.

“It’s an opportunity for us as Marines to help students in something in which they strive to do better, and it’s a great time to set a good example for them to follow,” said the Visalia, Calif., native.

In addition to being role models for the general citizenry, Marine musicians shoulder the added responsibility of setting the example for young performers.

“As caretakers of the arts, the perpetuity of military music is a crucial obligation,” explained Mangan. Because of this, the Marines of 3rd MAW Band take these events very seriously.

“I honestly think that investments should be made in the well-being of our future generations,” agreed 31-year-old Sgt. Victor M. Ney, percussionist with 3rd MAW Band and former band director. “Mentorship is our obligation

and responsibility.”

The students were ecstatic at the opportunity to play with the Marines as well.

“It was really neat to play with professionals,” said Flathead High School senior and oboist Debbie Henning. “I really picked up a lot at sectionals,” the Salt Lake City native said.

Senior trumpeter Mark Huff agreed.

“It is nice to play with upperclassmen,” the Calgary, Alberta, Canada, native said. “It is very interesting and educational to play with more experienced people and get to see their talents.”

Ramona Herwood’s daughter, Larissa, is a flute and piccolo player in the Flathead High School Band.

“I was a music major and flautist in college, but it is so wonderful for her to have the opportunity to do the things I didn’t get to do,” Ramona said. “To get to play with professionals is a great experience.”

Ramona understands the value of education in the arts also.

“At the beginning of a concert, Mr. Slater usually introduces the band and asks all the students who have 4.0 GPA’s or are in sports or other extracurricular activities to



A Flathead High School student plays the flute alongside members of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band in a joint ensemble performed in front of the Marine Corps Exchange March 26. Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull

stand. By the end of the introduction, the whole band is standing, and you really see the discipline and excellence provided by music education and involvement,” she said.

While this event may have gained one or two potential

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Flathead High School students show off their musical talents alongside the Marines serving as role models for them to follow. Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull



The band conductor for Flathead High School directs his students as they play a solo for patrons outside the Marine Corps Exchange. The students then played with the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Band as a joint ensemble. Photo by Cpl. Kristen L. Tull

Navy officer serves as entomologist for FDPMU-2

Story by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III

MWHS-3 Combat Correspondent

AL ASAD, Iraq – For the past year, Army units have been eating, breathing and living desert. Now, the Marines have landed.

But why did they bring a bug doctor? Navy Lt. James J. English, entomologist, Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit 2, is not your ordinary Navy doctor. Leaving the enlisted ranks after more than eight years of active duty, he wondered what he could do to benefit the military with other-than-ordinary service.

“I looked back on my military career and asked myself if there was anything that I could do to help,” said the 34-year-old Fayetteville, Ark., native. “While I am out here I am only concerned with bugs or animals that might cause a disease or have a significant medical impact on their surroundings.”

“I have a Ph.D. in biology,” he said. “I received my Ph.D. faster because the college board did not think it would have benefited me to go through a master’s course.”

Now, serving his country in the western area of Iraq, English has found solace in his job and his surroundings.

“I knew what the next 20 years as a professor or high school teacher were going to be like,” he said. “Now, the job I have is predictable, but being in this area of the

world is very unpredictable.”

On any given day, Marines and Sailors here can catch English making treks through pools of standing water to inspect for disease carrying flies and mosquitoes.

“There are things out here that most people would not think twice about looking at,” he said. “But on the inside of those small puddles and pools of water are little creatures breeding and carrying diseases than can disable a Marine or Sailor and keep them out of the fight. My job is to help prevent that from happening.”

With several forward operating bases and forward arming and refueling points to take care of, English and his fellow FDPMU-2 members have got their work cut out for them.

“Lieutenant English is just one entomologist in this field,” said Lt. Cmdr. Jim Herbst, a Patchogue, N.Y., native. “But he is dealing with a large group of Marines and Sailors and half his job is getting to them.”

One key factor to having an entomologist in the area is the extended knowledge of what diseases can be carried by what bugs.

“Mosquitoes can carry a wide variety of disease,” he said. “I must be able to convince the Marines and Sailors that having their sleeves down all the time is actually helping them.”

English also believes the presence of the FDPMU has more of a human-interest impact.

“The military is trying to cut down on



Navy Lt. James J. English, a 34-year-old entomologist from Fayetteville, Ark., with Forward Deployable Preventive Medicine Unit 2, inspects the water at a pool March 20 for possible disease-spreading mosquito larvae and eggs. Photo by Sgt. J.L. Zimmer III

using chemicals to treat for insect problems because most can be treated with simple protective measures,” he said. “If there is a shower that is running water out on the dirt, the water contains soap which does not allow for mosquito larvae to mature.”

English is just one of 11 that was sent to Iraq from the FDPMU-2, a team sent to an

operational area to assess and determine ways to prevent or slow the spread of disease.

“As an enlisted person, you do what you are ordered,” he said. “The challenge out here it getting the Marines and Sailors to do what you ask them so they can help themselves.”

NMCRS officials focus on commitment to excellence

Story compiled by Cpl. Paul Leicht

MCAS Miramar Combat Correspondent

Since 1904, the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society has provided financial, educational and other assistance to members of the U.S. Naval services, eligible family members and survivors in need while receiving and managing funds to administer these charitable programs.

With headquarters in Arlington, Va., NMCRS is a non-profit charitable organization sponsored by the Department of the Navy and operates nearly 250 offices ashore and afloat at Navy and Marine Corps bases throughout the world.

The NMCRS provides financial assistance to eligible recipients in the form of interest-free loans and grants to help with emergency needs, as well as need-based scholarships and interest-free loans for educational purposes, said Ann W. Evans, director, Miramar Office of the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society.

“The NMCRS primarily provides financial assistance through educational programs for those under conditions of need,” said Evans, who first joined the NMCRS in 1961.

“Some of our services include budget counseling services, food lockers, infant layettes and Budget for Baby Seminars, thrift shops and visiting nurse services. Financial management is a big part of our services, and many of our clients are young with little experience handling funds or managing a household.”

Evans said the NMCRS’s vision is to be a “center of excellence” committed to ensure that all available resources are used to help all Marines and Sailors, including active duty, retired and their eligible family members, to be more financially self-sufficient and better able to find solutions for their financial needs.

“Our volunteers are absolutely wonderful,” said Evans, a Phoenix native. “We have more than 3,000 trained volunteers, both ashore and aboard ships, that do a great job to help accomplish the major portion of NMCRS’s work. The volunteers are supported by a small group of employees.”

Evans said that the NMCRS enjoys an active partnership with the Navy and Marine Corps and benefits significantly from the command structure here at Miramar and

around the globe. The commanders themselves, as well the senior-enlisted leadership, chaplains and Family Service Center personnel, play a very important role in helping the NMCRS provide the financial assistance to those with mis-managed funds.

Although sponsored by the Department of the Navy, the NMCRS receives no funding from the government, Evans added.

The work of NMCRS is supported by an annual fund drive conducted by the Navy and Marine Corps and by a direct mail campaign of the Navy and Marine Corps retired community, said Evans.

“Both fund drives are conducted under the auspices of the Secretary of the Navy and all contributions are returned to clients in the form of relief or educational assistance,” Evans explained. “In February we sponsored a successful budget initiative and the latest fund raising campaign enables us to provide help to servicemembers when they have financial difficulties as a result of need. So far the fund-drive has been successful, but we are really looking for even more assistance than ever before.”

HMH-465 builds squadron from scratch

Story by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

MAG-16 Combat Correspondent

AL ANBAR PROVINCE, Iraq – A crew of Marines from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 toils during the warm Iraqi winter days and another works through the chilly winter nights for one particular purpose - to get the squadron’s eight CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters fully operational and in the air as soon as possible.

HMH-465 arrived in country late February, and the Marines have been working steadily to piece the helicopters together again.

Staff Sgt. John Klimm, HMH-465 flightline staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge, said it wasn’t routine maintenance that had the Marines working day and night, but the unique method that was used to transport the aircraft.

“The helicopters didn’t break down and maintenance was not overlooked on the planes,” claimed Klimm. “To transport (the helicopters) we had to do a C-5 breakdown. We had to get the aircraft down to a certain size to get it into an (Air Force C-5 Galaxy cargo plane).”

Most of the main components are stripped from the helicopter in order to get it into the plane, claimed Lance Cpl. Michael Wolf, CH-53E crew chief, HMH-465.

“To break one of these (helicopters) down, you have to take off the main and tail rotor blades and gear boxes,” he explained. “Then we have to replace the tires with smaller tires, lower the suspension system and take off the auxiliary fuel tanks and other miscellaneous parts.”

After all the parts were taken off the planes, they were stored inside the helicopters and flown over in the cargo planes. But the real work begins for the crew chiefs, avionics technicians, airframe and hydraulic mechanics, corrosion control technicians and aircraft mechanics, he said, when the planes arrive in country.

“Building up takes longer because you have to check bolt torque specifications, perform function checks and replace

consumable items,” he explained. “Before we fly, we have to test all of our equipment.

“It’s time consuming,” he added. “We have to scrutinize everything.”

The Marines are taking all precautions not to damage anything while they are putting the helicopters together, Klimm said, but there are a few benefits to look at while the Marines are working.

“Since the (helicopters) are so far torn down, we have access to look at all the areas of the plane that we cannot normally see,” he explained.

Wolf added that this is a definite bonus to day-to-day checks. “We inspect the planes daily,” he said. “But now, as we’re putting the plane together, we can do little things now that will save us lots of time later. There is no such thing as a loose bolt on these planes.”

These “little things” will hopefully keep the planes from breaking and get the mission accomplished, Wolf said, after all, “When these things break, you can’t just pull over to the side of the road.”

The job of putting the planes together is hard on the Marines, Klimm explained, but the Marines will appreciate the hard work once it is done.

“This gives us a good chance to do what we train for,” he said. “It gives the Marines a sense of accomplishment to see an aircraft take-off that they completely tore down and put together again.”

When the helicopters are finished and in the air, the Marines can start conducting business as usual, Wolf said.

“I’m anxious to get back to what we always do,” he said. “Get the job done in the air.”

With all the rotations of Marines in flux because of deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, Wolf claims the squadron has faced a normal routine that has been changed.

“This is just what we do,” he said. “It is normal to deploy, but it’s not usual for us to deploy this quickly. However, we do what the Marine Corps needs us to do.”



Marines from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 465 work with a crane to reattach one of the main rotor blades of a CH-53E Super Stallion helicopter. The rotor blades were just a few of many parts that were removed from the helicopter in order to transport it via cargo plane to Iraq. The squadron is part of Marine Aircraft Group 16, which is in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Photo by Sgt. Nathan K. LaForte

Marines in Iraq support local vendors, economy

Compiled by CPAO

3rd MAW Forward Deployed

AL ASAD, Iraq – Third Marine Aircraft Wing units here and other forward operating bases took part in Field Ordering Officer Training March 22.

The objective was the training of basic contracting law to allow these Marines, Sailors and Army personnel to make purchases supporting airfield operations using local Iraqi vendors.

While deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom II, one mission of the Marine Corps is to work toward the goal of stabilization and improving the local economy, according Lt. Col. Daniel A. Pinedo, comptroller, 3rd

MAW.

Transfer of goods and services and purchasing supplies and materials from local sources using cash purchases should help to accomplish that mission. However, in order to make the proper purchases, the servicemembers must be trained.

“We don’t have the use of credit cards here so it provides for the immediate purchase of goods, streamlining and expediting the buying process for immediate

needs,” said Pinedo.

Advance parties embarked and set up the equipment needed to stand up and maintain the operations here. These purchases provide much-needed sustainability to help complete the mission.

“The FOOs are the stop-gap between major contracts with slower turnaround time,” said Pinedo, a native of Oceanside, Calif.

Maj. Joseph Burroughs, I Marine Expeditionary Force contracting officer, traveled

here to provide the training.

“The average labor rate under Saddam Hussein was around \$3,” he said. “Now it is closer to \$10. This is wealthy considering where some of these people are coming from.”

Properly using request procedures is all it takes for the FOOs to get what they need for their unit and at the same time stimulate the local economy.

“We want to maximize every dollar we spend,” Burroughs said. “We have nearly 20 (ordering officers for 3rd MAW). Each one of these has \$25,000 to spend on the locals for supplies and manual labor.”

“This is a lot of money to inject into the economy,” he concluded.

‘The average labor rate under Saddam Hussein was around \$3 ... now it is closer to \$10. This is wealthy considering where some (Iraqis) are coming from.’
Maj. Joseph Burroughs

Chapel weekly schedule of events

Holy Family Catholic Community

- ♦ Mass: 11 a.m. Sunday, 11:30 a.m. weekdays.
- ♦ Rosary: 10:30 a.m. Sunday.
- ♦ Confession: 10:15 a.m. Sunday or for appointments call Father Berchmanz at 577-1333.
- ♦ Religious classes for children for first communion, confirmation: 9:30-10:45 a.m. Sunday.
- ♦ Youth gathering and planning following mass Sunday.
- ♦ Baptism: Normally the first Sunday of the month. Call the chaplain's office for details.
- ♦ Marriage: Call the chaplain for details at least six months before wedding.
- ♦ Instruction in the Catholic faith (RCIA). Call the chaplain's office for details.
- ♦ Scripture Class: 7 p.m. Wednesday in Chapel classroom.
- ♦ Choir Practice: 6 p.m. Wednesday in Main Chapel.

Liturgical Christian

- ♦ Sunday: Choir rehearsal at 9 a.m.
Liturgical worship at 9:30 a.m.
Adult/Youth/Children Bible study at 10:45 a.m. Young Adults Fellowship at 5:30 p.m.
- ♦ Tuesday: Morning prayer group (Room 4) at 6 a.m.
Contemporary Gospel Service at 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Wednesday: Crafts and conversation at 9 a.m. Free childcare provided.
Women's bible study at 10:45 a.m.
Baptist service at 7 p.m.
- ♦ Thursday: Liturgical choir rehearsal at 7:30 p.m.
- ♦ Friday: Baptist bible study at 7 p.m.

Jewish

- ♦ First Friday of the month at MCRD San Diego at 7 p.m.
- ♦ Last Friday of the month in Edson Range Chapel Camp Pendleton at 7:30 p.m.

San Diego Sockers

Fifty percent of the ticket prices to tonight's San Diego Sockers soccer team home game at 7 p.m. against Monterrey will be donated to the Navy/Marine Corps Relief Society's 2004 San Diego Active Duty Military Fund Drive.

All active duty military, reserve, Department of Defense employees, retirees and their families are invited to attend future games and show their support for NMCRS.

For more information, contact your unit NMCRS Fund Drive representative.

Multi-cultural heritage

Miramar's Youth Sports Complex will host the 4th Annual Multi-Cultural Heritage Day Celebration May 6 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The celebration will have cultural and ethnic display booths as well as cultural entertainment to highlight the uniqueness of the many cultures at the air station and in the local community.

Attendance is open to all Marines, Sailors, retirees, civilian employees and their guests. Admission is free.

For more information, call 577-4098.

Miramar Station Theater closed for renovations

On Jan. 12 the Miramar Station Auditorium/Movie Theater was closed for renovations for a minimum of 90 days. During this time, the theater is closed for all training and movie program opportunities.

Renovations include new carpeting, tile and seating, as well as installation of an air conditioning and heating system, a fire safety system and a new roof.

Choose to Lose

The Semper Fit Fitness Center is holding a free Choose to Lose summer fitness program from April 20 to May 11.

Program participants will meet Tuesdays from 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in the Semper Fit Fitness Center conference room.

Attendees can learn how to lose weight, become fit and eat right.

For more information, call 577-7963.

Youth olympic games

Miramar Youth Sports and the Miramar Youth Center are sponsoring Youth Olympic Games Monday at Mills Park at 1 p.m.

The cost is \$3 per athlete, and the event is open to children ages 5 to 12.

There will be 10 events, and medals will be awarded by composite score. Every athlete receives a gold, silver or bronze medal with additional prizes for the highest score in each age group.

Free hot dogs, chips and soda will be available for each athlete.

For more information, call 577-4136.

Technology Expo

All Miramar personnel are invited to attend the free Miramar Technology Expo

Thursday at the Officers' Club from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Many exhibitors will demonstrate the latest in computer products, international cell phones, information technology, automated storage solutions and much more.

For more information, call (888) 603-8899 ext. 252.

Sleeves up, Clocks forward

The change of seasonal uniform for the summer period begins Sunday, at which time Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area Marines and Sailors will wear their camouflage utilities with sleeves up. Commanders are authorized to permit sleeves down to accomodate temperature fluctuations.

All clocks must also be turned ahead one hour Sunday at 2 a.m.



For information on deployed 3rd MAW Marines and Sailors, call the Dictaphone at 1-877-616-8762.

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JPAC. Lehl explained that JPAC doesn't usually become involved with closed cases.

However, Little said, "Lehl, being a former Marine, felt strongly about helping this VFW Post, so he did a quick search of JPAC's database."

The JPAC records indicated the remains were transported to California, but no specific location was indicated. Lehl then requested Garcia's Individual Deceased Personnel File.

Little contacted Dobson to inform him it might take a month to locate the records concerning the specific whereabouts of Garcia's remains. Dobson said to Little, "Chuck, we've been trying to find Garcia for years - a few more weeks is nothing to us."

Their efforts were rewarded with a confirmation from Lehl that Garcia had been disinterred in 1949 and reburied in the Holy Cross Catholic Cemetery in San Diego. With the anniversary of the death of Garcia nearing, some members planned to pay respects to their fallen comrade from Ramona.

Retired Col. Matthew Blackledge, former commanding officer of Marine Wing Support Group 37 and representative of

VFW 3783 in attendance at the grave of Garcia March 3, explained the reason why it is so important to bring fallen heroes home and why they were their there to pay their respects.

Blackledge said it is important "Whether that warrior was a Marine, soldier, Sailor or airman. The response is very simple but important. Those of us who survive combat have a moral obligation to our friends and fellow warriors that made the ultimate sacrifice to make sure they are never forgotten. This is our payment of the debt we owe them for preserving the freedom of this nation and the world.

"By doing this, we demonstrate to those that now wear the uniform of the military services of our great country that their sacrifices will be remembered," he added. "They need to believe and understand this in order to make the tough split-second choices on the battlefield to ensure victory. We must pass this spirit of patriotism from generation to generation.

"This understanding is crucial to ensuring that the United States of America, this fledging bastion of just over 225 years of freedom on the world stage 10,000 years of recorded history, survives. Without the United States of America, freedom as we

know it now, will crumble," he said.

A gravesite isn't the only token left behind to serve as a reminder of Garcia's sacrifice. A letter reached the Gallagher family, a family that took Garcia in before he left to fight the war as a Marine, shortly after they had been notified of his death.

The letter reads, "Dear Mrs. Gallagher: We just got back from the front lines on the invaded island of Iwo Jima which we invaded along with the 3rd and 4th Marine Div. on Feb. 19. I was never so scared as I was on the front lines seeing all my buddies get shot. The Japs aren't so dumb in their military tactics. The Marine Corps is only 750 mi. away from Tokyo.

"The Japs are giving us hell and we're giving it right back at them. There's still a tough hill to climb so I'd better get some rest while I can so until I see you and Ed again, so long for the present. Gratefully yours. (Ilario.)"

Remembering and paying respect to those who have sacrificed for the freedoms we almost enjoy, to most, is a small task. Some read a history book or rent a documentary. However, others undertake this sometimes daunting mission with an enthusiasm and tenacity venerable of the most proven war heroes. It is their work that

keeps the legacy of an orphan alive and the importance of history in the hearts of the youth.

For more information on America's traditions, freedoms and history, contact VFW Post 3783 at (760) 789-7888 or 0831.

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recruits for Marine music, both the students and Marines walked away with intangibles they will remember and cherish for life. When asked what he thought of the experience, junior trombonist and Kalispell, Mont., native Tyler Brack exclaimed, "I'd do it again in a second!"

Wingspan

Wingspan airs on Channel 44 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 11 a.m.

Wingspan is a local command access program that informs the Marines and Sailors aboard Miramar about what is going on around Miramar and the Corps.